

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION IO-14

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 NSCE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6378

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 1202

E.OM 11652: GDS
TAGS: XA, UR, CU, MPOL, SO
SUBJECT: SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA; SOMALI VIEW

REF: STATE 134913

1. OFT-REPEATED SOMALI ASSERTIONS THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS ACTING AS A NEO-COLONIAL FORCE AND HAS AMBITIONS TO DOMINATE AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARE NO DOUBT BELIEVED BY THE GSDR. THE CUBANS ARE PERCEIVED AS BEING ENTIRELY SUBORDINATE TO THE SOVIETS, INDEED, THEIR "MERCENARIES". THE SOMALIS BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING ITSELF IN STRATEGIC AREAS SUCH AS THE HORN; THEY ALSO SEE THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS AS WILLING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OTHER CONFLICTS IN AFRICA.

2. IN VIEWING THE WORLD IN HIGHLY ETHNOCENTRIC TERMS, THE SOMALI APPRECIATION OF ATTENDANT PROBLEMS OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INTERVENTION IS FOR THE MOST PART LIMITED TO CONCERN FOR THE SDR AND DEEP RESENTMENT IN SEEING A SOMALI MILITARY VICTORY IN THE OGADEN TURNED TO DEFEAT NOT BY THEIR ANCIENT ADVERSARIES THE ETHIOPIANS, BUT BY SOVIET AND CUBAN FORCES. THEY ARE ALSO CONCERNED THAT THE SOVIETS MAY WISH TO AVENGE THE HUMILIATION INFLICTED ON THEM

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BY THE SOMALI EXPULSION OF ADVISORS AND LOSS OF BASES IN NOVEMBER 1977. THE ALTERING OF THE STRATEGIC BALANCE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, IS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO THE SOMALIS, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN FEARS FOR THE SDR, BUT BECAUSE OF THE FEARS OF THEIR CLOSEST ALLIES, THE MODERATE ARAB STATES.

3. THE SOMALI PRESCRIPTION FOR THE PROBLEM OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IS A SIMPLE ONE: COUNTER MILITARY FORCE WITH MILITARY FORCE; ARM SOMALI FORCES TO PERMIT THEM TO EFFECTIVELY COUNTER SOVIET-BACKED ETHIOPIAN AND CUBAN FORCES, PROVIDE SOMALIA WITH THE WEAPONS NECESSARY TO MEET ANY SOVIET OR CUBAN THREAT. THE SOMALIS ARE ALSO ACTIVE DIPLOMATICLY IN EFFORTS TO CONVINCE THE NAM THAT CUBA NO LONGER QUALIFIED AS NON-ALIGNED, AND IN SEEKING POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE SOMALI POSITION AMONG OAU MEMBERS.

4. THE GSDR IS NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WHETHER OR NOT THE SUBJECT OF SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA IS CONSIDERED DIVISIVE. NOW THAT SOVIETS AND CUBANS ARE OUT OF SOMALIA THEY FEEL FREE TO CONDEMN THEIR PRESENCE AND IN CALLING FOR NON-INTERVENTION BY FOREIGN POWERS, THEY KNOW THAT THIS IS NOT LIKELY, AND THAT EACH COUNTRY IS PURSUING ITS OWN ENDS WILL SEEK AID WHERE IT CAN. THE SOMALIS KNOW THAT ITS IRREDENTIST CLAIMS HAVE ALREADY PUT IT AT ODDS WITH MOST OTHER OAU MEMBER STATES, AND THEY KNOW THAT THEY CANNOT LOOK TO THEM FOR SUPPORT OR SYMPATHY FOR THEIR PRESENT PERDICAMENT. NONETHELESS, THEY SEEM TO BE GENUINELY BAFFLED BY WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS INDIFFERENCE ON THE PART OF MOST AFRICANS TO THE THREAT OF SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH HEGEMONY ON THE CONTINENT.

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Message Attributes

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